

First Unitarian Church of Providence

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

January 18, 2023

ATTENDING:

Prudential Committee

Joan Richards, President

Odile Mattiauda, Past-President

Hillary Salmons, President-elect

John Dooley, Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Dana Borelli-Murray, Personnel Liaison

Peter Laarman, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Lisa Voutes, Social Justice Liaison *absent*

Alison Green, Spiritual Development Liaison *absent*

Andy Wilby, Stewardship Liaison

Ex-officio – Rev. Roger Peltier, Acting Senior Minister

Church Staff Attending

Mandy Neff, Interim Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

Guests

Rick Richards, Commitment Drive

Diane Baxter, Commitment Drive

6:50 PM – Gathering / Chalice Lighting / Covenant Reading

Opening Words – (Joan) - Rilke

Call to Order – 6:53 PM

Review of December, 2022 minutes (Joan) – Motion: To approve the December minutes as presented. (Louise/ Odile) Approved unanimously.

Financial Report (John) – We are at 50% of the church year. Expenditures are at 48% and non-endowment income is at 60.5%. This is usual for this point in the year. Attendance and giving are better than last year. No new surprises.

HIGHLIGHTS OF STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS (See google drive for full reports)

Acting Minister (Roger) – Listening circle with Spiritual Pathways and leadership was held regarding silo-ing between youth and adults. We worked on better worship integration for intergenerational services. Children coming into service is one way to integrate. Adults working together with and supporting youth is another. Two youth will become worship associates.

Strong recommendation to support at least two youth delegates at GA. Several youth are interested and have applied.

Director of Religious Education (Mandy) – RE attendance is double what it was last year. Families continue to register throughout the year. Twenty families registered for new family breakfast. Several youth have applied to attend GA. We have recently separated PreK and K-1 groups. Eighty children are registered – average attendance is around fifty. We are in a great position in comparison to other mi- size churches, many of whom have so few children that they have only one RE group, where we now have seven.

Director of Operations (Nancy) – UUA certification process requires us to report to UUA on a variety of data points: finances, makeup of congregation and RE, etc. This report determines number of delegates for GA and also UUA dues. We completed the certification process today.

Mosaic Steering Team (Claire) – Kate Niles from the Mosaic Steering Team has begun regular First U Times articles highlighting existing anti-racism work throughout the congregation and also linking to articles or resources of interest.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

General Assembly Recruitment Process (Hillary) – The recruitment application for GA delegates was printed in last week's and this week's newsletter and will appear again next week. It will be included in this Sunday's invitations. There is only one adult application to date, in addition to the youth applications. It was noted that the Article II Study Commission has submitted its final draft to the UUA Board and it will be important to note with the recruitment that this year's GA delegates will be able to submit amendments and also be charged to vote on the new proposed Article II language which includes new language on values and covenants to replace the current seven principles. Claire will get this information to Nancy for inclusion in the next two announcements -- See https://www.uua.org/files/2023-01/a2sc_rpt_01172023.pdf. Claire, Hillary, and Mandy will review applications.

Signage – (Rick Richards) – Rick reviewed signage project at last meeting. Sarah Bradford has identified someone to provide us with designs for both vertical and horizontal signs. After PruComm decides between vertical and horizontal, they would then design a prototype, followed by a final design. The cost estimate for this three step design process is \$3,2000 – less if there was no need for two design types (vertical and horizontal). The design cost would not include construction cost. **Motion: Proceed with vertical sign design only** (Hillary/Peter). The motion passed unanimously. This will be conditional on approval of finance and investment committee that capital funds can be identified for this purpose.

Green Team Report – (Joan) – The report contained two major recommendations: First: To replace the existing light bulbs throughout the campus with LED bulbs which will help save money and the planet. It was recommended to use RISE Engineering for this work at a cost of \$5,675 (capital expense) **Motion: To move forward with this recommendation** (John / Andy).

The motion was approved unanimously, conditional on approval of finance and investment committee that capital funds can be identified for this purpose.

The second Green Team recommendation is to sign on with Power Options to switch our electricity supply from fossil fuels to renewable sources. It was unclear what we would be committing to by signing a contract with Power Options. John and Nancy will talk with Power Options to get a more detailed proposal to bring back to PruComm.

AV Upgrade – Conference capability and related screen and equipment will be needed for the January 29 Transylvania Partnership service. These items were already on the campus Audio Visual needs list for capital expenses, and if we do not purchase now, would need to be rented for close to the cost of purchasing. These items would also allow for hybrid capability in the Haynes room and portable for other locations as well. **Motion: To purchase items for Hybrid Conference and Presentation Capabilities at \$3,000 paid for out of the capital projects fund** (John / Hillary). Motion passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM BUDGET COMMITTEE

Operating Expenses for Commitment Drive -

Priorities for new Spending (John / Diane) – The budget committee has met and come up with an initial draft budget which John reviewed with PruComm. Changes of note include: Cost of Living Adjustment, 6% for lower paid staff; 3% for higher paid staff. Utilities show an increase because we will now be paying for utilities out of the operating budget -- not the endowment or PPP loan. Additional expenses for RE are for a needed new curriculum and expenses for sending youth to conferences and service trips, something that is common for congregations our size and sought out by our youth.

Commitment drive will ask for 5% increase in pledges. Priorities – Staff Salary support, social justice programming, support for speakers and enhanced community engagement, support for youth engagement. Diane shared that the plan is not be doing phased asks this year. Materials will be delivered to all households at one time. Steward visits will not simply target high givers, but a variety of people at varying levels of financial and other commitment. Visit will discuss priorities, but not making individual dollar amount asks. Stewards will be given script. Packet and individual ask letters are being finalized.

Capital Expenses Next Steps (Andy)

There was a meeting yesterday with the stewardship team to discuss re-organizing financial team. Process is moving along with creating a better financial structure beyond the finance and investment committee activities. Three bids will be needed for any specific project to be undertaken. Andy shared a chart outlining the projected costs for the following capital expenses:

Organ (Estimate Pending – likely about \$1M) – The organ is currently unplayable and in need of complete renovation. Ortloff Company who is familiar with the organ and has assessed it in the past, will be coming during the week of January 23 to assess for both a quick fix and larger overdue renovation– Possibility of Champlin Foundation Grant (Application in June, but may require matching – most other grant opportunities will also require a match).

Kitchen (Estimate of \$167,000) – The Kitchen needs to be repaired to be made operational. Could also be upgraded into a commercial kitchen that could generate income.

AV Initiative (Estimate of \$72,500 - \$85,000) – Audio visual upgrade estimates have been compiled by Michael Cappelli. \$3,000 hybrid capacity just approved tonight. Hearing assistance option that would work through users' cell phones is \$2500 other alternative \$15,000. Important to include people who need hearing assistance in the decision which way to go. Band and music capabilities costing \$10 000 already have funds available in Kelly Smith Fund (currently \$17,000).

Campus Interior Maintenance – (Estimate Plan – Possible \$2M for current needs) An analysis of all the regularly scheduled building maintenance needs has recommended to put aside \$200,000 each year to keep up with building maintenance. **(Project Manager / Consultant)**

Meeting House Accessibility (No hard estimate here, but possibility of up to \$300,000) – Need a working group to identify architects and a church task force (including accessibility, choir, front expansion as all of these needs impact each other) – Possibility for architectural expertise at UUA? There may also be the possibility of grants in this area. Again, there would likely need to be a demonstrated match for meeting the criteria for grants.

There is a suggestion for a “Building our Future” Capital Campaign with a \$5M goal. Need structures to clarify how to address this variety of needs and also to address planned giving program. We need a robust development program and we need leadership to build financial strategy.

Other Business (Items for Next Month's agenda) –

- Summary of Retreat and continued Strategic Planning
- Delegates for GA

Upcoming PruComm Dates (Note change in Exec Comm and PruComm):

Exec Comm – February 1, 6PM zoom

PruComm – February 8, 6:45 in person

Annual Meeting – June 4, after service

Closing Words (Joan) - Rilke

Adjournment – 9:00PM

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk